

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FARM BILL

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to applaud my colleagues for coming together in a bipartisan fashion to pass the farm bill conference report.

There is much to be excited about in the final version of this 5-year reauthorization. First and foremost, the farm bill will bring much needed certainty and predictability to farmers and ranchers over the next 5 years. This is especially important given the intense pressure our agriculture producers are facing.

If you look at the numbers across the Nation, net farm income is approximately half of what it was when we passed the last farm bill. Farm bankruptcies are up by 39 percent since 2014; financing has become more expensive; commodity prices have plummeted; input costs are rising; and the trade outlook is volatile and uncertain, to say the least.

Farmers across the country—regardless of where they call home or which crops they grow—are hurting. The farm bill that Congress approved last week, delivers meaningful and real relief for our farmers and ranchers in these very difficult times. It is the big bill for my home State of Arkansas as well as across the country.

Agriculture is a driving force of the Natural State's economy, adding around \$16 billion to our economy every year and accounting for approximately one in every six jobs. That is why agriculture advocacy groups in Arkansas were very excited when we passed the final version.

The Arkansas Farm Bureau said it was "pleased that Congress has recognized how important the new farm bill is to the hard-working farmers and ranchers of this country" and expressed gratitude that we came together "to pass this critical legislation before the new year."

The Agricultural Council of Arkansas said it "cannot stress enough the importance of the farm bill and the need for it among Arkansas farmers." The council went on to add "a farm bill with meaningful support is critical in preventing significant harm to Arkansas farms."

The Arkansas Rice Federation said the farm bill will provide "certainty in such a variable agricultural climate."

Along with strengthening key risk management tools for our farmers, the farm bill also helps our rural communities by authorizing key economic development and job creation programs. It helps rural Arkansans with everything from combating the opioid crisis, to home financing, to high-speed internet access.

Sending this bill to the President is about as important as it gets for my State. It would not have been as beneficial to Arkansas farmers and ranchers without the diligent efforts of the

conference committee leadership who worked to ensure that the harmful, arbitrary policy changes were excluded from the final conference report. As a result of these efforts, family farms are protected from additional regulations and unnecessary paperwork.

I commend Chairmen ROBERTS and CONWAY, as well as Ranking Members STABENOW and PETERSON, for their commitment to make this bill fair and equitable to the diverse needs of producers across all regions of the country.

Again, as always, special thanks to the staffs who do so much hard work around here to get these things done. It was a heavy lift. They worked hard to ensure that we would get this done before adjourning this Congress.

I would also like to thank them for their willingness to include provisions that I advocated for in the conference report. The elimination of all State performance bonuses in SNAP is something I pushed for in the last farm bill. I am pleased that this time we got it included. The Federal Government partners with States to administer SNAP, but in order to best serve program recipients, the States must be good partners. Unfortunately, States have exaggerated their performance to receive these bonuses. This policy change saves \$48 million per year. Is a smart reform that we have made in this bill.

I was particularly proud that another provision, championed by my friend Senator HEITKAMP and by me, was included. It would allow trade promotion funding for agricultural products to be used in Cuba. This is a big win for our farmers and ranchers who have consistently been working to open up more access to the Cuban market.

Cuba imports approximately 80 percent of its food, and our farmers and ranchers produce the highest quality, lowest cost, and safest food in the world.

Additionally, I welcomed the inclusion of my provision that clarifies the definition of livestock to include live fish for purposes of the Department of Transportation's hours of service regulations, as well as reauthorization of the ATTRA Program, which does so much to help our veterans who want to get started in agriculture, and reauthorization of the Delta Regional Authority.

The farm bill conference report includes a true investment in conservation to help the waterfowl in Arkansas, and I was excited to see the Century Farms Act that Senator MURPHY and I authored was also a part of the package.

With approval of the conference report last week, we are just one step away from the farm bill becoming law. President Trump has indicated his support of a farm bill that will ensure certainty and predictability for producers. We are sending one his way, and I look forward to it becoming law.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Will the Senator suspend a moment?

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

SAVE OUR SEAS ACT OF 2017

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany S. 756, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany S. 756, a bill to reauthorize and amend the Marine Debris Act to promote international action to reduce marine debris, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the bill, with McConnell (for Grassley) amendment No. 4108, to provide for programs to help reduce the risk that prisoners will recidivate upon release from prison.

Division I of McConnell (for Kennedy/Cotton) amendment No. 4109 (to amendment No. 4108), to require the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to notify each victim of the offense for which the prisoner is imprisoned the date on which the prisoner will be released.

Division II of McConnell (for Kennedy/Cotton) amendment No. 4109 (to amendment No. 4108), to require the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to notify each victim of the offense for which the prisoner is imprisoned the date on which the prisoner will be released.

Division III of McConnell (for Kennedy/Cotton) amendment No. 4109 (to amendment No. 4108), to require the Director of the Bureau of Prisons to notify each victim of the offense for which the prisoner is imprisoned the date on which the prisoner will be released.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO LYNN JENKINS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I am on the floor this afternoon to honor a friend, a colleague, and the senior Representative from Kansas, Congresswoman LYNN JENKINS, who has gracefully and honorably served Kansas for two decades in both our State and here in the Federal Government.

While I am going to talk a little bit about LYNN's history and past, none of this should be taken just as something that is being read in her honor. She is a very special person who has served Kansas so well, and she brings such tremendous attributes to public service. We will miss her greatly, and Kansans will have benefited from her service, but she will also remain a role model for many who look for ways to make America and to make our State more prosperous, with a brighter future.